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The Commonweal

October 28, 1949

Productivity in Britain

Paul Derrick

The Irish Character

Walter O'Hearn

The Steel Strike

John C. Cort

VOLUME LI 15c NUMBER 3

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The Lewis Pool

THERE was something grandiose about the idea that ten AFL unions would each contribute a quarter million dollars a week to support their fellow-workers in the strike against the steel industry. People are still discussing it even if Mr. Green has turned it down. This princely total, when added to the millions in the United Steelworkers' own treasury, threatened, in many minds, to enable the strikers to hold out indefinitely.

If these millions, however, were divided among the half million men now idle plus a second half million soon to go out if the strike is not settled, it will be seen that each worker and his family could count on very little for his larder from that source. The AFL contribution would have amounted to but $5 per week per family, and only half that when the second contingent of steelworkers went out. The union itself recognized this and planned to deploy such funds—as well as its own—for certain special uses. Among the items mentioned were soup kitchens, or the like, for men on the picket lines, advertising appropriations for presenting the union's case to the public, and relief of a few families who constituted special hardship cases.

In other words even unions which are relatively strong today cannot support strikes of indefinite duration. The workers themselves have not built up adequate savings to take care of the barest living expenses; the unions do not have big enough per capita treasuries to support their members and families during a protracted strike. The strike weapon, then, has only temporary value; it is a threat of disruption for a time, inadequate for a final showdown.

Before long the pinch will be acute for American steelworkers and their families. It will be present, if less arduous, for workers in other industries thrown out of employment for lack of materials, for these latter will have unemployment benefits for a time. As the strike period lengthens, the wielding of that weapon exacts increasing courage from the individual union militant.

ALL THIS tends to indicate why the strike constitutes so poor a method of reaching a solution. It is conditions in the steel towns far more than the bad effect on the national economy which should soon lead to effective mediation of the dispute. (A number of economic observers now say, in fact, that restriction of the steel supply, intensifying demand for that basic commodity, may even prolong and heighten the present prosperous state of things.)

What is the point at issue in the steel strike? Is it a living wage, the right to security or anything basic upon which the cause of labor hangs? No. The question is whether steelworkers should contribute a modest, if unspecified, amount to social insurance and pension plans which the industry is to set up. There is nothing sacrosanct about the recommendations of the President's panel on the subject, although the union had every right to make that recommendation of the benefits entirely contributed by the companies the substance of its demands

The companies' insistence on worker contributions involves both a lower rate of take-home pay and the principle that the workers contribute toward their social security proportionately to company contributions. Might not an acceptable compromise make wage scales for the new contracts high enough to cover the workers' contribution? In this event the union would not settle for a lower take-home wage than the panel recommended, while the companies would have the desirable brake on ever-increasing pension demands provided by the proportionate contributory principle. Or are the companies adamant and the unions inexplicably insistent that their members take no part in building up and administering their own pension funds?

Morals and the Bomb

"IN SOME crude sense, which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the [atom] physicists have known sin;

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and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose." The man who wrote these words was not a theologian or professional moralist but Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, no mean physicist himself.

Then in the midst of the Battle of the Pentagon last week, Rear Admiral Ralph A. Ofstie said: "We consider that strategic air warfare, as practiced in the past and as proposed for the future is . . . morally wrong. . . ."

Army and Air Force spokesmen and their partisans were again quick to point out that the Admirals' original grievance had been that the Navy was being deprived of the means of delivering the "immoral" bomb. Senator McMahon, chairman of the Joint Atomic Committee, voiced the suspicion of many when he dismissed Ofstie's testimony as sour grapes. "They wanted the supercarrier to deliver A-bombs," he said. "Now they haven't got the supercarrier, they don't find the bomb very good."

But Admiral Ofstie's statement, whatever the double-talk involved, brought to the headlines a question that must bedevil the mind of any man who takes the moral problem of war seriously.

In the very nature of things, can atomic warfare find moral justification? If future wars are to be largely atomic wars, making the random mass destruction of non-combatants not lamentably incidental but actually essential to military operations, does non-resistance become a moral necessity? Have the ordinary weapons of modern war reached such fiendish efficiency that their very use tips the scales on the side of injustice, all other considerations aside? Catholic moralists have always granted the right and even the duty of legitimate self-defense. The same moralists, though, lay down as a condition of just war the absolute rejection of evil means. Are the A-bombs we have been stockpiling since Hiroshima to be rejected as "evil means," whose use could never be justified, whatever the provocation?

If the answer to these questions is yes—and a man who takes Admiral Ofstie's position is perhaps logically obliged to take his place among the conscientious objectors—it seems the moral right to legitimate defense in the modern world is largely an academic question. For one thing, it is highly unlikely that an atomic war can be won with non-atomic weapons. And it is extremely improbable that Russia, above all nations, now that she has the bomb will forego its use from any moral considerations.

Would any nation on earth today accept the conclusions that follow inexorably if, as Admiral Ofstie said, the warfare being planned for the future is "morally wrong"? Fear, of course, may do what sheer morality could never do. Poison gas was not generally used in World War II largely because both sides dreaded reprisals. It is just possible that the last atomic bomb ever to be dropped "in anger" fell on Nagasaki in August, 1945. If such be the case, however, not conscience but the most basic of instincts will probably get the credit.

Neither our nation nor our leaders seem to have reached the stage where military effectiveness is likely to be subordinated to moral considerations. Still if morality means anything, it means that it is the primary, most demanding of all claims.

Admiral Ofstie is a competent naval leader, but, be it remembered, an amateur moralist. His specialized knowledge is surely of service to the moralists who above all are qualified to pronounce on the morality of the A-bomb. Perhaps the Admiral, amateur though he be, has anticipated the considered judgment that will one day come from them.

If so, there will be a certain irony in the fact that modern science for all its impressive accomplishments has, from the viewpoint of morality, left us naked and defenseless in the face of our enemies.

Logic

SINCE October 3rd, in the Czechoslovakia of Franz Kafka and Joseph K., men have been awakened early in the morning (usually before eight o'clock) by three policemen (two of them plainclothed) and have been quietly arrested. After imprisonment these men have been informed that since their past or current economic and social status indicated their attitude was that of "failure to find a positive relationship with our people's democratic order" they were sentenced without trial to labor camps. Men in good physical condition were reported sent to a steel plant at Kladno, Bohemia, and to compounds near uranium mines. Others went to other labor camps, older men went to penal institutions. These men were former industrialists, merchants, members of the liberal professions, small businessmen, etc. The arrests were expected to continue, and the government intention was reported to be the elimination of the Czechoslovakian middle class by the end of the year.

At the same time the government proclaimed a law making the support and appointment of clergymen a state function. Papal edicts were forbidden circulation. Three hundred priests were already in prison.

The genocide practiced by the Nazi government was directed against the Jewish people. Anti-semitism, like other racial prejudices, has a partial psychological foundation in the fear people bear for their own economic and social security and predominance, and in their desire to find a tangible "reason" for their own inadequacies or failures. The diabolical outlet for this is found in the persecution of an identifiable and

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relatively weak minority. Political advantages for a ruthless government can be found in directing a nation's attention and hatred against a scapegoat race.

The Czechoslovakian arrests are quite different from the twisted and cold-blooded immorality of racism. With the Czech government it is a matter of logic. Its domination is threatened by the existence of a class of people who have close connections with the old Czech society, and who, above all, are a class of educated, independent people with a tradition of liberal political action. Ergo, they are arrested, dispersed, and eventually eliminated. History rarely sees the cold annihilation of a social class.

The Catholic Church, as an independent and powerful institution essentially opposed to a materialistic society, must, just as logically, be destroyed.

The United States can do very little. It can protest strongly, and the irritation of the Czech authorities over Western press accounts of the arrests make it seem that protests do some good. It could, if Senator McCarran would be gracious enough to permit it, do something to assist those Czechs who escape to Western DP camps. There is little else, on the material level, that can be done, short of eventual success in the complex Western political war on Communism.

The Verdict

GIVEN the head of steam that has been fired up by Communists and anti-Communists, it is a remarkable credit to our court system that the verdict against the eleven Party leaders came off without any public rejoicing or stone throwing. The occasion called for no demonstrations; the figure of one who advocates the violent overthrow of his own government, of one who sells out his country, the figure of the collaborator, is one whose conviction has seldom aroused glee or gloating, either here or in Europe. He is somehow too much a figure of human weakness, of a certain tragedy, and the verdict of a nine months' trial expresses and gives vent well enough to our feelings of contempt for his deed.

After the trial, someone asked Paul Robeson if he thought a capitalist in Russia would receive as fair a trial as this one. He sidestepped neatly, saying that such a question had nothing to do with this trial. Well, in a way it hasn't. It should not, and it did not, make any difference to us how it would be done in Russia. The fact is that we have inherited a system of trial by jury that is able to hear the argument of a revolutionary minority and pass judgment on it in such a way as not to deprive lawful minorities of their rights. That is an achievement of enormous importance, especially at a time when hysteria and hate could have torn our legal system to pieces.

It would be foolish to think that this trial has settled "the Communist problem." Legally, we have need to examine and refine dispassionately our ideas on such matters as minority rights, so-called thought control and subversive activity, when this verdict is reviewed by the Supreme Court. More broadly, there may be an inclination now to pass off the whole Communist complaint as only insidious social agitation. It is easy to soothe the conscience that way, to excuse our guilt for social injustices and to put that guilt out of mind, as we have put away a discredited minority of conspirators. One thing this trial has done is to help clear off the demagogues from the field of social action. Which should leave that field to those with the energy to take over.

The Farm "Compromise"

THE House and Senate conferees have just agreed unanimously on the terms of the price support bill. What they present as a "compromise" is the extension of full 90 percent parity for another year, and then a 80 to 90 percent sliding scale for 1951, after which the Anderson 75 to 90 percent schedule is supposed to go into action. This Congressional decision means two things: continuing high food prices supported by high taxes, and a highly significant general lesson. The latter is that once you have set a scale of government largesse in our American system, it is politically impossible to reduce it. At least that is what the politicians believe. There is no reason to expect that even the modestly sliding scale destined for 1951 will actually go into effect when the time comes—any more than the Aiken sliding scale legislated for 1950, which this latest Congressional action has now abrogated. How many office-holders would publicly favor reducing supports for farm prices in an election year? That is one of the beauties of government subsidies.

* *

PHILIP BURNHAM, who joined THE COMMONWEAL *in* 1934 *and became co-editor in* 1938, *has resigned as Executive Editor. Considering all he has contributed to making* THE COMMONWEAL *what it is, it is gratifying to state that this change may be only temporary and that in the meantime Mr. Burnham has consented to serve the magazine in the capacity of Contributing Editor. John Cogley, who has just joined the editorial staff after a year at the University of Fribourg, has been editor of the Chicago* CATHOLIC WORKER and of TODAY. He has *contributed a number of signed articles to* THE COMMONWEAL *during the past year. William Pfaff, of Columbus, Georgia, who joined the staff during the summer, is a recent honor graduate of the University of Notre Dame.*

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Productivity in Britain

From Britain, a plan to increase production and dollar income through greater worker incentives

Paul Derrick

THE economic problem facing Britain today is basically the problem of increasing production. In the nineteenth century it was easy for Britain to export manufactures in exchange for cheap food. Today the rest of the world is becoming increasingly industrialized and other countries do their own manufacturing; at the same time the ruthless exploitation of virgin farmlands has led to erosion in five continents and a world food shortage. Britain is finding it harder and harder to export manufactures in exchange for food; the terms of trade are moving against her. In the short run we British simply have to maintain our export markets in order to obtain essential supplies of food and raw materials. We produce little more than half our own food and without imported raw materials many of our factories would have to close down. The devaluation of the pound and the recent agreement in Washington which may lead to increased American investments in British colonies and reduced American tariffs will help us to balance our external payments. But it will also mean that we shall have to pay more in our exports for what we import and that the cost of living at home will rise.

★

WHEN Sir Stafford Cripps announced the devaluation of the pound on September the 18th he declared that there must not be any general rise in wages in spite of the increased cost of living. Even before devaluation was announced and immediately after the Trade Union Congress meeting at Bridlington had passed by a large majority a resolution supporting the Government's stabilization policy, 37 Engineering Unions had put forward a demand for a £1 a week all-round increase in wages which would cost the country more than £100 millions. As a consequence of devaluation, pressure for wage increases is likely to grow further, and the Government is likely to meet Union demands to some extent by allowing wage increases for lower paid workers within the framework of the stabilization policy laid down in the *White Paper* of February, 1948. It has already increased the profits tax on distributed profits from 25% to 30%. Both these measures are likely to destroy incentive and reduce the nation's productivity.

If devaluation is to be effective in restoring our balance of external payments, we shall, however, have to stabilize wages and prices and increase productivity. Devaluation means that we have to export a greater quantity of manufactured goods to obtain essential supplies of food and raw materials. We can export a greater quantity because we can sell them at a lower price and we have to pay a higher price for the essential imports. We have to produce more goods to export in exchange for food and raw materials and prevent wages rising at home in spite of the increased cost of living. We must prevent costs and prices rising by stabilizing wages and at the same time increase efficiency by incentives.

★

ONE thing tending to reduce productivity in Britain is the high rate of taxation, which destroys incentive. We cannot afford so much in the way of subsidized social services, television, Brabazon aircraft, jet civil aircraft, wonderful new roads, festivals of Britain and other luxuries. We cannot afford to have so many people in Government offices employed in administrative and clerical work. We cannot afford the welfare state. We cannot afford to continue paying £500 million a year in price subsidies on food. We shall have to reduce Government expenditure in various ways likely to increase the cost of living in order to reduce taxation. To a greater extent we shall have to allow people to spend the money they earn in their own way instead of collecting a large part of earnings in taxation and providing free benefits and services of one kind and another. For people tend to produce more when they are allowed to spend most of their own earnings.

The British people are more heavily taxed than any in the world. More than 40 percent of the whole national income is collected in taxation. There is no doubt at all that taxation will have to be reduced if productivity is to be increased, but people who are fond of pressing for tax reductions sometimes forget that the distribution of the whole of the surplus revenues of industry as a dividend to stockholders has very much the same kind of effect upon the worker as

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heavy taxation has upon the employer. If the employer finds 60% of his profits are collected in taxation he may say that it is not worth his while to produce efficiently. But in exactly the same way, if the worker knows that the whole of additional income resulting from extra effort is going to be distributed in dividends to stockholders, he also may consider that it is not worth his while to produce efficiently. Low productivity in Britain is due not only to taxation but also to the conviction of the workers that the purpose of production is to increase the profits of the stockholders. They are told by the Government that "productivity pays," but they feel that it pays the employer rather than the worker.

The policy of voluntary dividend limitation introduced in Britain in March, 1948 did not have any great effect upon the attitude of the workers. Most companies limited their dividends voluntarily to 1947 levels, but the workers knew that the undistributed profits accumulated as a result of voluntary dividend limitation would be distributed, sooner or later, to the stockholders. Dividends were limited, temporarily, but profits were not. At the Labor Party Conference in May, 1948 a Union resolution urging the more effective control of profits was carried by a large majority; so was one at the Trade Union Congress in September calling for a "stricter limitation of profits." At the Trade Union Congress at Bridlington in 1949, an Amalgamated Engineering Union resolution called for legislation for the limitation of profits, but this was withdrawn at the last minute after consultation between the AEU leaders and the General Council. The delegates did not have an opportunity to support statutory dividend limitation without at the same time opposing the Government's whole stabilization policy. In putting the General Council's case for stabilization, Mr. Vincent Tewson, the General Secretary, declared that statutory dividend limitation was impracticable, even though Sir Stafford Cripps had declared in July, 1948 and again in January, 1949 that he might have to introduce legislation on the matter.

Sir Stafford Cripps repeated on September the 27th that he might have to introduce statutory dividend limitation with the budget in April, 1950. He may be forced to introduce such legislation long before then in order to stabilize wages and prices in spite of devaluation and the increased cost of living. The *Financial Times* thinks he ought to introduce such legislation at once instead of threatening to do so in six months' time. "This is no case for proceeding by threat," it said. "It is a case for legislation—for placing a proposal before Parliament where it can be examined, debated and decided upon after exposure of its weaknesses." Such legislation would doubtless be fairly complicated. It would be arbitrary and unfair to try to freeze all dividends at 1947 levels, but it should be possible to require some limit to be placed on the return payable on all classes of shares. Dividends on existing shares might be limited to the 1947 level or 5% of market values on a particular date or 5% of nominal values, whichever might be the highest, and higher dividends allowed in particular cases where a higher return seemed justified.

*

IF DIVIDEND limitation were made statutory and permanent and it were provided that the surplus revenues of industry should be distributed, sooner or later, as a dividend on wages and salaries, then pressure for wage increases would be greatly reduced. The workers would know that surpluses accumulating as a result of restraint in wage demands would one day be distributed as a dividend on wages, or be absorbed in price reductions, instead of going wholly to the stockholders. Moreover the workers would have every reason to cooperate wholeheartedly with management in increasing production. They would know not only that "productivity pays" but that it paid *them*. Restrictive practices would tend to be abandoned by Trade Unions as likely to reduce dividends on wages, and the attitude of the British worker would come closer to that of the American worker. The American worker is interested in increasing production and determined to get his share of the additional income that may result. If the return on capital were limited by law in Britain, the British worker would know that additional income resulting from extra effort would mean higher dividends not for the stockholder but for him, without the necessity of bitter bargaining with management. He would have every reason to put his back into his job.

It is interesting to remember that when limited liability was first introduced in Britain in 1855 the Christian Socialists argued strongly that the investor whose liability was limited by law should have his return limited by law, too. This view was supported by the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, the late William Temple in his book, "Christianity and the Social Order" published in 1941. It was also supported by Msgr. Ryan in his pamphlet "A Suggested Limitation of Capitalist Property," first published more than ten years ago, and also by Father Andrew Gordon in the Catholic Social Guild Year Book for 1949, "Property in the Christian Tradition". Father Gordon does not, like Archbishop Temple and Msgr. Ryan, go as far as proposing a legal limitation of the return on capital, but he does propose dividend limitation as one of the best ways to achieve a spirit of partnership in industry. Jacques Maritain takes the same view in his book "The Rights of Man" when he speaks of associ-

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ative ownership of the means of production. Some British industrialists, such as Sir Charles Bartlett of Vauxhall Motors and Mr. Wilfred Brown of Glacier Metals favor dividend limitation as a necessary condition of good industrial relations and increased productivity. Many other employers seek to pay a reasonable return on capital rather than the highest possible return and try to charge reasonable prices and pay fair wages. As the *Economist* said on July 30th, "the responsibility for dividend limitation cannot be put wholly on the Government for some directors practiced dividend restriction long before the Government thought of it. In doing so they mentally segregated the company from its shareholders. Once capital is raised it is easy for management to slip into the idea of regarding members of the company as 'lenders' who ought to be satisfied with a more or less fixed dividend."

Relatively a few people in Britain seem quite to realize that the statutory and permanent limitation of dividends would change the whole basis of company law and would turn every enterprise into a cooperative concern in that it would be based on the cooperative principle of a limited return on capital. Yet that is the direction in which the British economy is likely to develop, not because it has much connection with what the Labor Party leaders mean when they talk of socialism, or with what the Conservatives mean when they talk about partnership in industry, but through sheer economic necessity. Unless the law is changed so as to make the workers partners in the process of production we shall not get that increase in production so necessary if we are to pay for essential imports of food and raw materials and avoid widespread unemployment and a greatly reduced standard of living.

The Irish Character

Mr. O'Faolain writes about his people

Walter O'Hearn

MR. SEAN O'FAOLAIN in his lifetime has done down many of the generalizations about Ireland. Here is a major Irish writer who actually lives in Ireland and who yet manages to cock a snook at her cherished institutions and survive.

This is a far nobler enterprise than the common practice of self-elected Irishmen of genius, composing their valedictory thrusts between bouts of nausea on the boat to Holyhead. It is a better way of life than Yeats', wrapped in a vedic mist; nobler than Joyce blaspheming in the faubourgs or O'Casey shaking his fist from Chelsea.

Mr. O'Faolain's different approach can probably be traced to a difference in his character and circumstance. Sean O'Faolain is a Corkonian by birth and profession—he now lives in Dublin—and a "native" Irishman, which means that he comes from the Catholic, consciously Celtic majority. Which also means that he is by nature a realist and a fighter.

His claim to be a major writer—a claim made not by himself but by others, among whom I wish to be included—comes from his novels. One of these, *A Nest of Simple Folk,* certainly deserves a place among the greatest written in English since 1920. But it is a long time since we have had a novel from him. For at least eleven years he has been giving his time to historical essays, travelogues and various odd-jobs in literary journalism.

★

THE latest O'Faolain book to be published here, *The Irish—A Character Study,* (Devin Adair, $2.75), belongs to the category of the historical essay. Mr. O'Faolain himself makes a larger claim for it. He pretends to be assessing and rewriting Irish history from the ground up. He calls his book, in a charming introduction, "a creative history of the growth of a racial mind."

Of course, it is nothing of the sort. It is an undocumented collection of opinions, quotations and digressions, differing only in tone and style from the Irish Christian Brothers' textbook on the same subject which distressed my youth. Irishmen never write history plain, but only essays on it. Any period in their past is starting point for a polemical flight. Mr. O'Faolain realizes this himself. "All our histories," he writes, "are nationalist, patriotic, political, sentimental." He has the grace to call his own work "a pioneering effort, a hit or miss affair of instinct rather than knowledge." What he does not realize is that in his own way and his own time he

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has fallen into the same trap as did his predecessors.

Somebody has said that to read Toynbee you should first read several thousand books to prepare yourself. To follow any historical essayist one should be reasonably familiar with his thousand points of reference. To follow Sean O'Faolain one should have his own familiarity with the mass of pre-Christian legend in Ireland, with the survivals of Celtic literature, with the great controversies of the Norman and Cromwellian periods. I have not, but one surely can tell an essay from a history, just as one can tell a gazebo from a house. A man may build a gazebo and it may be a very fine thing of its kind but he errs if he says it is a house. *The Irish—A Character Study* is a very interesting thing of its kind, but it is not a history.

What will impress the reader is its candor, which is almost gleeful. When Mr. O'Faolain sets about the myths with which Irishmen warm their hearts at patriotic gatherings, he reminds you a little of a strong-armed boy at a country fair, throwing balls at the target and hitting the crockery, too. The fact that he scores some palpable hits does not quite redeem his effort. It is roaring good fun; it quickened the pulses of this part-time Celt, in whom five generations removed from Ireland have bred detachment. But it must also be written on the score that it is the purely destructive portions of this book which have appealed generally to American critics. Most of these have liked O'Faolain's Irish character study but I vow they have liked it for the wrong reasons.

Two of these reasons are immediately apparent. No work by an Irishman which incidentally deflates the Irish-American ego will be unpopular in literary America. Many of our dedicated votaries are a trifle anti-Hibernian, if only because they must profess to love other minorities. Everyone, it seems, must throw stones at something and an intellectual can dislike quite openly the prosperous, conservative, puffed-up Irish without losing his franchise as a liberal.

The other reason is that this is a debunking book. Accordingly it brings a nostalgic pang to every middle-aged American of literary pretensions. He remembers his own youth, when every recruit carried Mencken's *Mercury* in his knapsack and the fight for the four-letter word was a sacred fight. The debunker has gone out of style here, and privately he may feel that back in the Twenties he was a bit of an ass. The glow remains. Also, to be fair, the literary struggles of the other post-war period were a leaven in American writing and thinking.

Whether you call him debunker or by some other name, the literary rebel never exists without reason. In the American twenties he rose in protest against the perverted remnants of puritanism and the cult of the Babbitt.

If Mr. O'Faolain, a quarter of a century later, is debunking in his own country he is also protesting against something. On the evidence of his own book, he is assailing two figures in contemporary Irish life, whose power he wishes to reduce. These might be called the priest and the patrioteer.

*

SEAN O'FAOLAIN is a Catholic. He is also a writer who has seen books of his own banned in Ireland by a clergy-inspired censorship (Graham Greene and other writers of Catholic faith have met the same fate). He writes: "The Irish public is often puzzled by a feeling (which is entirely justified) that Irish writers are, for some reason which the public cannot understand, irritated by Irish life. But it is natural that we should be. As far as we are concerned Irish life is our material, and we naturally want it to be various, complex, aware and interesting on as many levels as possible. We do think that it is not aware and that, indeed, we know that it evades awareness."

And again: "The Irish public may, to give an actual example, be puzzled that Irish writers tend to be anti-clerical, as they do."

Now two points here deserve examination. If the Irish people generally are puzzled by the anti-clericalism of the small minority who write, it is fair to conclude that they do not share the sentiment. Hence the clergy's yoke, about which we have heard a great deal, must not press too heavily on Irishmen generally. The priests may be exacting, but they cannot be unpopular. And here one comes to the suspicion that the Irish intellectual wants to wrest from the priest some of the spiritual leadership of his people; that he is having a hard and discouraging try; that he is jealous. Indeed this is more than a suspicion. The point was made very clearly in Paul Vincent Carroll's *Shadow and Substance,* an admirable play but certainly not written from the clerical point of view.

If clericalism is an attempt by the clergy to invade and dominate all walks of life, anti-clericalism has too often taken the form of a secular raid on spiritual preserves. The Irish form of it is very open to this suspicion.

Point two: when Mr. O'Faolain wants Irish life to be "various, complex, aware and interesting" he cannot escape the suspicion that he wants a little more sin in it, or more open sinning.

*

IN a terrified world many people will agree that Ireland is an oasis and at times when the atomic equation troubles the rest of us, it is com-

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forting even to think of Ireland and the innocent, parochial life which is lived there.

It may be that this state of innocence is artificially preserved, just as Irish neutrality in the last struggle of mankind was artificially maintained. The power balance which made that neutrality possible has disappeared and it does seem at times that it would behoove the Irish to join the planet again and start worrying with the rest of us, before they are blasted into our company.

Yet one may doubt whether it is quite necessary for them to take on a full cargo of modern neuroses at the same time as they accept international responsibility. Mr. O'Faolain's position is comprehensible and one can even sympathize with it. A complex fellow who lives for any time in an oasis must get awfully tired of dates. For the wine of the cities beyond the plain he will risk the sandstorm and the chance that his bones will whiten under a cruel sun.

This is part of the O'Faolain case against the priests. He nowhere makes the mistake of supposing that the Irish clergy desire power for its own sake. He does assail them historically, for imbibing both Jansenism and Gallicanism from their French preceptors and—in the case of many higher clergy—for knuckling under to the British authority. Yet he has the grace to add a footnote about "the priests who died with the gun in their hands in '98, or were hanged or shot after the rising ended."

There is nothing new in these assaults on the Irish priesthood and some of the cumulative evidence impresses. One has heard too often that the combined errors of Port Royal and Bossuet were poured into Maynooth, to disregard the charge completely. The Irish puritanism which crossed the ocean lends some weight to it. It is also true of any clergy that when they begin to worry about the dangers of free thought they may tend to suppress any thought and translate the beatitude to bless the poor in intellect.

One cannot accept these charges at their full weight, however, when one remembers two things about the Irish. They have extraordinarily long memories and if their priests through history had let them down consistently they would not have power and respect today. They have also a tradition of rising and casting off unwelcome yokes.

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IT develops further along in Mr. O'Faolain's character study that his real target is not so much the cleric, but a type of clerical layman. "No Irish writer" he says, "has been as indignantly anti-clerical as the great Catholic novelist Bernanos and the reasons are not dissimilar. Bernanos' rage (in his *Brazilian Diary*) against the 'devots,' what we call the pietists, is fully understandable to us who see in pietism not innocence and enthusiasm but cunning and self-interest."

Developing this thought, he paints a really horrifying portrait of the new Irish bourgeois, a peasant yesterday, today a money-grubber behind a tariff wall, aping the worst traits of the continental bourgeoisie, wrapping himself in a green-and-saffron garment of patriotism and quieting his conscience with novenas. "I do not believe," he writes, "that patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel but I do believe that Chauvinism is."

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THERE is evidence to show that such a terrible, jumped-up caste has arisen among Irish people. Indeed there are examples of the type in communities of Irishmen abroad. It is really for the benefit of these bourgeois flag-wavers who clutch their money and their rosaries with the same fervor, that Sean O'Faolain has set himself to destroying the nationalist myths. Myth and boasting are peculiar solaces of this type and if there is a myth left standing in Ireland today it must be because *The Irish—A Character Study* has had no circulation there.

Beginning his assault on the tuppenny patriot, the squalid, uninteresting tasteless rogue, he destroys the prime legend about himself—his race. Any Irish chauvinist worth his salt claims to be a Celt. He is told here that the Celt in his blood is watered with Dane and Norman and the seed of later plantations. Many of us realize the Norman origin of such "native" names as Power, Burke, Fitzgerald, Walsh, Costello, Barry. So, according to Sean O'Faolain, are such Gaelicized names as MacAveely.

But this is a mere feint, a blooding of the nose. The real blows are coming. So many of us were taught that Ireland was "the light of Europe during the Dark Ages" and that the brutal Norman king snuffed the candle out. Not so, says O'Faolain. The Irish monastic culture was bright in its day but it had snuffed itself out before the arrival of Strongbow.

The chauvinist, now reeling, is informed that he owes practically everything in Ireland to "alien" invaders—to the Norman and Dane, Ireland's towns and cities; to the Norman her abbeys and castles, her noblest ecclesiastical ruins, her transformation of the clan system; to later implantation, mainly Protestant, her political institutions and consciousness of nationality; to the last group, through the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, her literature and her universities, not to skip "Dublin's grace, roominess, magnificence and unique atmosphere" or the Celtic revival, which

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stems from the initiative of Anglo-Irishmen.

By this time every right-thinking man of Irish blood is weak with rage and wrong-thinking ones, like this reviewer, are undisturbed, or even enjoying the spectacle.

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LACKING Mr. O'Faolain's more intimate Irish heritage, I cannot vouch for his statements, far less assail them. True, he talks about the Gaels as "the last wave of Celtic invaders" and tells us nothing about the earlier waves. He makes slanting, allusive references to the Tuatha de Danaan but he really tells us nothing about it. He has the courage to subtitle this chapter "political history" which it is not.

We are left with nothing to hold onto, except perhaps to resurrect our old notions of Firbolgs and noble Milesians, our hints of Grecian and Iberian ancestry. Mr. O'Faolain tells us that Christian Celtic historians mauled the old legends but he makes no attempt to unscramble them. Perhaps it is best for the Irish merely to assume that through them, many times diluted, runs the blood of the oldest, palest, purest of the Western peoples, clinging to their ragged edge of Europe and defying change. Mr. O'Faolain's excursion on this subject is an exegetic exercise and exegesis without text is impossible.

One can raise an eyebrow, too, at the generalization about Irish towns, having held the notion that Galway, at least, had some Celtic beginnings as a town. One can question whether Columbanian monasticism was really inferior to the Norman abbey. But one does not really want to question, if Mr. O'Faolain can persuade his countrymen to revise their folklore. The modern Irishman is a blend of many strains, who has tried to make his religio-political divisions coterminous with racial ones. Varying waves of conquest, each coming in with an assumption of superiority, have helped to preserve that fallacy. In actual fact, no nation on earth has shown a greater capacity to absorb a variety of racial strains and blend them into a unique character. The Ulster drum-beater and the "Anglo" squireen have more in common with a Wexford nationalist than they will ever have with any Englishman, even if the Englishman is their blood kin. For the Irish majority, then, to revert to racist legends and to pretend that they are a single, pure, persecuted strain is dangerous nonsense. Mr. O'Faolain is quite right to challenge this assumption. A few sodalities may burn his books along the way but he may yet succeed in chiding or startling his countrymen into other forms of expression.

The Labor Movement

The Steel Strike

THE Communists scream at the top of their lungs that Wall Street controls everything in America and is using that control to drive us all down the rocky road to disaster. The intelligent citizen's reaction is therefore to conclude that Wall Street controls little or nothing, and that if it does control anything, that control is pretty benevolent on the whole.

And it is amazing how the daily press plays along with this fiction. To take the steel strike, for example. Everybody knows that U. S. Steel is calling the shots for the operators, as it has since long before the CIO existed. But how many papers have reported the fact—which is an important fact, after all—that J. P. Morgan and Co., as it has since long before the CIO existed, is calling the shots for U. S. Steel?

To our knowledge, only Drew Pearson has put the finger on the House of Morgan, speaking through its agent, Enders Voorhees, chairman of the finance committee of U. S. Steel, as the determining factor in this strike. Pearson reveals that if President Fairless were molding policy, U. S. Steel would probably have settled long ago, and the others would have followed along.

Whether this last is true or not, it is evident that anyone who wants to make an objective estimate of the steel operators' policy and what lies behind it must consider the labor policy of J. P. Morgan and Co.

In 1935 the National Resources Committee examined the extent of the Morgan Empire. The list of top corporations in which Morgan enjoyed dominant influence or control—some in alliance with the First National Bank—reads like a history of labor trouble in the United States: Pullman, General Electric, U. S. Steel, Phelps Dodge, Montgomery Ward, National Biscuit, Reading Coal and Iron, American Telephone and Telegraph, to name only the more prominent union-busters. Some of these corporations, like Montgomery Ward and A.T.&T., are still fighting bitterly against the most elementary forms of collective bargaining.

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AND what is the labor policy in the home offices of Morgan and Co., in Wall Street itself? There is no bona fide union in these offices, if there is any at all. The labor relations of Wall Street as a whole may be judged by the experience of the responsible, anti-Communist Local 205, United Financial Employees, AFL, which has been attempting to organize the Street for some time now. That experience has been tragic, marked by violent anti-unionism. People who work there will tell you that the men who make Wall Street what it is are still living in the nineteenth century. Everything we have seen indicates that this remark applies perfectly to the men who sit in the paneled offices of J. P. Morgan and Co.

And how has this policy expressed itself in the steel dispute? We all know about the report of the President's

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fact-finders. This report was a considerable blow to the union's hopes. It completely rejected the demand for a wage increase. It also rejected the demand for an immediate pension. It recommended that the companies give 4 cents an hour to a health and welfare fund *minus* what they were already paying for that purpose, and that *next year,* starting May 1st, they give 6 cents an hour for pensions *minus* what they are already paying for that purpose.

This report was everywhere hailed as "public spirited", "far-sighted", "statesmanlike" by business spokesmen and conservative publications such as the steel industry's own *Iron Age*. Henry Ford II proceeded to use it to sign an agreement with Walter Reuther and the Auto Workers.

The report was blasted by the Communists, sneered at by John L. Lewis, and even attacked by William Green, conservative president of the AFL, because it granted so little of the union's demands. Nevertheless Philip Murray and the Steelworkers decided to go along with it. Immediately the attacks of the Communists, Lewis and Green were turned upon them, and particularly upon Murray, who, it was charged, had "sold out the workers".

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YOU would think that J. P. Morgan and Co. would be pleased with this report and would hail it as a victory for the American Way. But no! The report contained a "revolutionary doctrine", according to U. S. Steel. Taking his cue, A. B. Homer, president of Bethlehem Steel, said, yes, the report was "definitely socialistic."

Why? Because it recommended that the companies bear the entire expense of health and pension funds, without contribution from the employees. This was the revolutionary doctrine.

There is no question that men like Mr. Homer, Mr. Voorhees and the partners of J. P. Morgan and Co. are where they are because they have the courage and the vision to take chances, in the American Way.

For example, when they made these statements they were taking the chance that Murray would point out, which he did immediately, that Mr. Homer will receive a pension of $100,000 a year toward which he contributed not one cent; that Mr. Voorhees, along with Mr. Fairless and Mr. Olds, U. S. Steel chairman, will receive pensions of $50,000 a year toward which they contribute not one cent; that Andrew Carnegie introduced non-contributory pensions for workers at U. S. Steel as far back as 1911; that such big operators as Bethlehem and Jones & Laughlin still have such plans; that the majority of insurance plans in private industry are now non-contributory; that U. S. Steel and other big producers who own "captive mines" gave non-contributory plans to Lewis's miners three years ago; and that nobody, in his wildest dreams, has suggested that Lewis might be persuaded to give these up.

Mr. Voorhees (alias J. P. Morgan), Mr. Fairless and Mr. Olds may point out that in addition to their $50,000 pensions they will also get further benefits ranging from $13,815 a year (Mr. Olds) to $26,537 (Mr. Fairless) and that to these plans they contribute sums ranging from $4,410 a year to $5,910. But the CIO replies that last year these men received salary increases of from $20,167 to $22,367. If U. S. Steel will give its employees increases of $10 to $12 a month, it is a pretty sure thing that the workers would be glad to contribute the $2 to $3 a month that Messrs. Voorhees, Fairless and Olds insist they must contribute to a health insurance plan before U. S. Steel will agree to throw in 4 cents an hour itself. And the same with pensions. But U. S. Steel is convinced that wage increases would be inflationary, deflationary and bad.

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IS ALL this a little confusing? Then boil it down to this: U. S. Steel (J. P. Morgan and Co.) is trying to kid the American people into thinking that what is right for executives is wrong for workers, that what is all right for miners whom it employs is wrong for steelworkers whom it employs, that what was American for Andrew Carnegie in 1911 is "revolutionary" for Presidential fact-finders in 1949.

Of course, U. S. Steel (J. P. Morgan and Co.) assures us in full-page ads that it "favors proper programs of insurance, welfare and pensions for its employees." Yes, indeed. And what is its idea of a "proper pension?" Well, last year U. S. Steel pensions—for the workers, not the executives—averaged about $7 to $8 a month. The word was *month,* not week or day or hour. And this flows quite logically from the social philosophy of J. P. Morgan and Co., whose spokesman, Mr. Voorhees, testified before the President's fact-finding board as follows: "Pensions can take from people jurisdiction over their thrift and saving, and subject them to unwanted mass disciplines." But of course executives aren't people, or so it would seem.

There is certainly nothing evil about the idea of workers contributing to insurance or pension funds. But it does not follow that because they don't they are therefore going to get "something for nothing", or they will not be concerned with what happens to the money, or they will take less interest in the business. Anyone who is old enough to work in a steel mill, or anywhere else, is old enough to know that he gets nothing for nothing from nobody, except from God, his parents and the few others who happen to love him in spite of his ugly disposition. The steelworker knows that he is going to *work* for his insurance and his pension, and it makes no difference to him whether the money that pays for these goes directly from the employer or goes first into his own pockets on its way to paying for them. At least I don't think it makes any difference, any difference that matters, or should make any.

But such considerations are now completely beside the point. What are the facts that face us? The main ones are that a Presidential fact-finding board has handed down recommendations which in general were disappointing to the union. Murray and the Steelworkers went out on a limb to accept them. Other labor leaders on both left

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and right are trying to saw them off. Does it seem reasonable to expect the Steelworkers to yield to terms which would be even worse than those recommended by the Board, and worse than terms won several years ago by Lewis and several weeks ago by Reuther?

The Steel operators (J. P. Morgan), on the other hand, have tried to justify their rejection of the board's recommendations on grounds that are absurd in the light of their own past record and current practice.

A Labor Charity

THOSE who want to put a union label on their charity are invited by the AFL to contribute toward CARE Holiday Packages ($13.50 in all, but less is gladly accepted) and, if they wish, specify that these go to needy trade unionists to be selected by AFL representatives abroad. Address AFL Representatives, CARE, 20 Broad Street, New York 5, N. Y.

JOHN C. CORT.

The Stage & Screen

The Season (So Far)

RECENT openings having overtaken me hospitalwise, I think it will be fairest to all concerned to run brief notices of the whole current dance and dramatic scene. I should indeed like to exercise my customary brand of inching analysis with regard to some of these offerings, but alas, there lacks space for this indulgence. And moreover, I've got the suspicion that most of my readers—and certainly all of the managers—will be glad of a few plain reviews for a change. Chronologically therefore . . .

Twelfth Night: the most diffident and thoughtful editor I know languidly accepted my tickets for this version of the difficult comedy, and the next morning relapsed into enthusiasm over the telephone. Her notes ran something like this: "easy-going all round . . . everyone has good time. Set functionally o.k., although costumes seemed a little periodically mixed. Music disappointing, not well coordinated, but Frances Reid delightful, Arnold Moss elegant, and the clowns honestly funny." She underlines: *the audience loved it.* (*at the Empire*)

Gilbert & Sullivan: consensus claims that S. M. Chertock's presentation of both the "Mikado" and the "Pirates" lacks something of the style of the more famous companies, and something of the spirit of the amateurs. All agree, however, that the words and the music are unquestionably there. (*at the Mark Hellinger*)

Yes, M'Lord: if the prospect of seeing A. E. Matthews again charms you, this will be your dish. It is certainly mine. Mr. Matthews is eighty years old and one may say he has been for eighty years one of the best of actors. I am sure he was suave even in his bassinet; I am sure he knew precisely when to stutter, mumble, articulately declare, howl, beam, and somehow or other, exit under the quilt. In this present small saga of socialist England he leads and supports a number of good people. As a matter of fact, there's something of a duel between him and George Curzon by way of excellencies. It's probably safest to say that Mr. Curzon is perfect, and that Mr. Matthews is Mr. Matthews. But Mary Hinton and Gladys Boot are also on the scene. Barring a couple of dull juveniles, I should say the occasion is one for gratitude. (*at the Booth*)

Les Ballets De Paris: Roland Petit's international company is giving an extraordinarily interesting bill at the Winter Garden. The plum of the evening will probably be the very graphic "Carmen" danced by Renée Jeanmaire with Mr. Petit himself as Don José. But I was impressed by all of the work—Colette Marchand's particularly—and most of all, by the *acting* qualities displayed. The pictorial end is enchanting. All in all, exciting stuff. (*at the Winter Garden*)

The Sadler's Wells Ballet: England's celebrated company opened with "Sleeping Beauty," the longest ballet on record and every once in a while, the loveliest. From the moment of the curtain's rise, it was obvious that reports had not exaggerated the wonderful precision and skill of these dancers. Here is at last a complete definition of a ballet ensemble. It is breathtaking, and if it seems also somewhat soulless, I have no doubt that this lack was dictated by the stern classicism of the Tchaikovsky-Petipa piece. I shall be eager to see a more varied program, but want to note that the company is spending only four weeks in this town. It's to be urged that you try for tickets at once. (*at the Metropolitan*)

The Browning Version: it's a strange thing but most of the English playwrights seem at one time or other to have gone to public school and never never to have got out. Certainly Van Druten has never really emerged from behind a fifth form (is it?) desk. And now Terence Rattigan is hiding back there with him. I must say I think perhaps that is exactly where Mr. Rattigan belongs, but I can see no reason why good actors, such as Maurice Evans and Edna Best, should be spent proving this circumstance to the public. Mr. Rattigan's tiresome examination of a frustrated master and his shrewish wife is followed by something called "A Harlequinade." I was not able to follow this intelligently but it did strike me as an embarrassing chore for grown-up people to have to watch grown-up people accomplish. (*at the Coronet*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Hit That Line

THE football season is on in full swing, and for enthusiasts who can't get out to see their favorite teams, the movies are offering a couple of items that may serve as substitutes. *"Easy Living"* has to do with professional players, and because the film has the Los Angeles Rams in the background and some very well photographed shots of games, practice sessions and locker-room stuff, it has an air of authenticity which seeps into the plot. Based on Irwin Shaw's "Education of the Heart," this story tells about a star halfback, the highest

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paid player in pro football, who discovers that his heart isn't what it should be for such a rigorous game and that his ambitious wife, whom he loves very much, is more interested in his income and big name than in himself. With the exception of Lizabeth Scott who overacts the role of the selfish wife, the cast handle their various assignments well: Victor Mature as the husky halfback confronted with two blows to the heart, Lucille Ball as the secretary who carried a torch for him, Sonny Tufts as his friend and team mate, Lloyd Nolan as the manager-coach, and a group of supporting players who add to the realism of the piece. It is unfortunate that Director Jacques Tourneur, who caught so well the aura surrounding pro football, let the wife part of the plot get out of hand. But neither football nor movie fans will find this film dull.

"Father Was a Fullback" isn't as football as it sounds. It's a comedy about a college coach who is having trouble with a losing team and a couple of teen-age daughters. The elder of these girls (Betty Lynn) is feeling rejected and neglected, and papa (Fred MacMurray) who is having woes of his own, tries to find her a boy-friend. The picture, alas, tries too hard to be funny and the result is a long tedious affair smothered in talk about adolescence problems. Maureen O'Hara is very pretty as the girls' mother, and Natalie Wood is occasionally amusing as the younger daughter who finds herself at the film's end just starting on the problems that her older sister has cleared up. College boys might become a little more understanding of a coach's private life, but football fans will want more action in their movies.

I took a five-year-old boy to the preview of the new Disney, which is called *"The Adventures of Ichabod and Mr. Toad,"* and I must say he was the most enthusiastic person in the projection room. I preferred the first half of the film which is vaguely based on the episodes connected with Toad Hall in Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in the Willows." Basil Rathbone does the narration while Toad, Rat and MacBadger go their hilarious way through this animated cartoon, a way that speeds faster and faster as Mr. Toad gets more and more involved in races and chases. My young companion, however, liked the last half of the film better, the part in which Disney animates "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Bing Crosby does the narration and songs in this, and although Bing is in good voice, the cartoons are less imaginative than usual. Irving's story, nevertheless, is a natural for this medium and very exciting indeed. Knowing that the Headless Horseman was about to throw his head at Ichabod in the spooky chase scenes, I put my arm around the youngster next to me so he wouldn't be too frightened. My gesture was wasted. He shouted with glee when the pumpkin head came flying through space at the scared schoolteacher. And afterward he raved on and on about the Ichabod tale, almost to the complete neglect of the funnier (I thought) Toad sequence. All of which goes to show that it is very hard to predict or recommend comedy. In any case, when you go to this latest Disney, take the kids, at least those over five.

Harpo Marx is so wonderful in *"Love Happy"* that I can almost overlook the film's sluggish plot and frequent slow scenes. But as I just said, comedy is difficult to prescribe. Let it suffice to say that I found Harpo wonderful. Groucho and Chico come off second best; Ilona Massey and dancer Vera-Ellen are very decorative; and the other people are just incidental. Marx fans may long for the good old days of "Duck Soup" and "Horse Feathers" but they'd be foolish to miss any of Harpo's new absurdities, the best of which are pure surrealism, as in the scene in which he plays "Happy Birthday" on his harp for a girl whose birthday was forgotten; and then he sticks his hand into his pocket, pulls it out—and there is a lighted candle on the end of each finger.

Admirers of Victor Mature who want to see more of him than "Easy Living" offers can go to *"Red, Hot and Blue."* But it is only fair to warn you that this comedy has been designed strictly for Betty Hutton and Mature fans. (The possibilities of a pun here are too obvious to be taken advantage of.) Victor is not happily cast as a theatrical director of shows for the intelligentsia, especially since the picture concentrates pretty heavily on Betty who bounces through reel after reel until finally the story (or what passes for one) winds up in a long slapstick chase. It is surprising that John Farrow, who is a good director, couldn't get more life into a comedy starring the volatile Miss Hutton. Perhaps the trouble is with the script, high point of which offers bouncing Betty as Ophelia in a jazzed up version of "Hamlet." Is Laurence Olivier shuddering?

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Of Note

Gilson on Christianity and the World

THE *Catholic Times* of South Africa (16 Keyes Avenue, Rosebank, Johannesburg) recently printed a translation of the address given by Etienne Gilson at the Catholic Intellectuals' Week in Paris last May. M. Gilson says that Christians are reproached by the world for despising the world, that "Christianity is indeed a radical negation of the world. But it is at the same time an unqualified affirmation of nature. . . . The 'world' is not nature; it is nature seeking to be independent of God, to become something autonomous, self-contained and self-sufficient." Man's likeness to God is especially true in man's intellect, and the Christian loves the intellect and things of the mind more than do his critics, for the Christian directs them to the vision of God and God's truth. This attitude "denies us nothing that the [secularized view of the world] gives, it gives us all that the other denies." This is the fruit of man's divine sharing in the Incarnation. M. Gilson then makes this warning:

> It pleases me to be told that the whole of philosophy is not worth an hour's labor if he who tells me is a Pascal, one of the world's greatest thinkers. One has the right to look down on what one knows

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and has transcended. Pascal did not despise science or philosophy; but he resented the time they had occupied him and distracted him from the contemplation of the deeper mysteries of divine love. But we are not all Pascals; we cannot look down on that which is above us, and science is one of the noblest praises of God: it is the understanding of what God has made.

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ did not come to save men by science or philosophy. He came to save all men; even scientists and philosophers. Science and philosophy are not necessary to salvation; they themselves need salvation. On the other hand, we must beware of an indiscreet zeal which, under pretext of saving them, destroys them. It is to be feared that, with the best intentions in the world, some "apologists" are apt to do this. To use science for apologetic purposes is an admirable program, provided we know not only our science but our apologetic.

For to be a good apologist one must first be a theologian—a very good theologian. This is a rare thing. There are too many so-called theologians who know smatterings of other people's theology or who are content to repeat theological formulas without having ever thought out their real meaning. But if we are going to "use" science for apologetics, we must also be very good scientists, not cultivated dilletanti with smatterings of scientific information. If we would study science for God, we must study it for its own sake—or as if we were studying it for its own sake: that is the only way to acquire it. The same rule applies to philosophy. It is an illusion to suppose we can serve God by learning off a number of philosophical formulas without knowing why they are true. Similarly, it is useless to denounce errors if we do not understand why they are false. All this applies also to art. We are told that it was the Faith that raised up the great medieval cathedrals; but the Faith would have been powerless without architecture. Though the facade of Notre Dame may be an expression of the soul's yearning for God, it is also certainly a construction of geometry.

We Catholics, we who affirm the inherent goodness of nature, must take as the guiding principle of our action the axiom that piety can never dispense with technique. Without technical ability the most intense piety is incapable of using nature for the glory of God.

In conclusion, we must consider the other danger that threatens us. To serve God by science or art we must practice them as if they were ends in themselves. This is difficult, because they always tend to become so in fact, and as such they are regarded by our contemporaries. We must on no account become infected.

Rural Life Convention

A PRESS release from the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (30 W. 16 Street, New York City 11) gives the agenda of the 27th annual NCRLC Convention to be held in Columbus, Ohio, November 6-9.

Norris E. Dodd, Director-General of the World Food and Agriculture Organization will be chief speaker on Family Day, November 7. On the same program the Rev. W. J. Gibbons, S.J. will talk on "Rural Life and the Family," and Cosmas Blubaugh on "An Ohio Farmer on Conservation." The section meetings will include a discussion of "Liturgy in the Home," by Mrs. Albert Berger (who recently published a liturgical cookbook). The second Family Day general session will be addressed by Senator Clinton Anderson.

November 8 will be given over to education (including adult education) in rural communities. Talks on "Liturgy and the Rural Life" and "Rural Retreats" will be given in the afternoon for pastors of rural parishes.

Missions in the Rural United States will be the general subject of the third day. Auxiliary Bishop Helmsing of St. Louis, and Rev. Andrew Lawrence, M.S.SS.T., a pastor among Mississippi sharecroppers, will give two of the addresses; and the convention will be closed by Bishop Treacy of LaCrosse, NCRLC president, and Bishop Ready of Columbus.

Catholic International News

The Church and Public Life

"THE Hierarchy, led by the Pope, has the task of formulating general principles concerning the Christianization of public life as well as the task of sharpening the consciences of men; the practical application of these principles, however, is primarily the responsibility of laymen," Joseph Cardinal Frings, Archbishop of Cologne, declared in a reply to the daily newspaper *Die Welt* of Hamburg. *Die Welt,* which is published by the British Occupation Authorities and has a circulation of 715,000, the largest of any newspaper in Germany, was accused by the Cardinal of having misrepresented the meaning of an address on Church and public life which he had delivered as a religious ceremony in Siegburg.

Cardinal Frings declared that in his Siegburg address he had pointed out that in the first years after World War II there was no German Government which could speak for the people. The Bishops, therefore, had considered it their duty to take the initiative in working for the return of the prisoners-of-war, in urging aid to the people expelled from the East, and in warning against hasty measures in connection with the land reform program in the Soviet Zone.

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"Now that such matters can be taken care of by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Church will be able to a certain extent to withdraw from such matters," the Cardinal said he had stated. *Die Welt,* he complained, quoted this sentence, but gave it an erroneous interpretation by claiming that the Cardinal had said that, after interfering in matters which were none of their business, the Bishops would now "return to their ecclesiastical tasks."

The newspaper report, the Cardinal declared, omitted an important paragraph in which he stated the relations between Church and public life as follows: "I do not mean that the Church does not have to play a certain rôle in shaping public life. The Church has received from Christ a double task: to lead the individual to God, and to influence the entire community life of man according to the principles of the Christian faith. Pope Pius XII, in his address to the Cardinals in February 1946, expressed this by saying that the Church is 'the vital principle of human society.' The Hierarchy, led by the Pope, has the task of formulating general principles. . . . The practical application of these principles, however, is primarily the responsibility of laymen. The German Bishops acted in accordance with this concept when, before the elections to the Federal Assembly, they urged the faithful to go to the polls and to cast their ballots for candidates who may be expected to apply Christian principles in legislation on education and the family, in the reconstruction of the social order, and in matters concerning the relations between Church and State." (Cologne 10/5—CIP.)

Japanese Social Program

As a result of discussions at their annual meeting, the Japanese Hierarchy will issue a joint pastoral letter in the coming year on the moral problems raised by the flood of indecent literature and films in Japan. A plan similar to the Legion of Decency in the United States is being considered, they stated.

It was also announced that the Hierarchy contemplates sending more Japanese priests to various universities in the United States and Europe for training in social studies. These priests are to specialize in Catholic Action organization and methods with a view to promoting Catholic social doctrine through labor schools, study clubs, pamphlets and books.

The Bishops also stated that they favor the establishment of more Boy and Girl Scout units in Catholic parishes.

Other matters discussed by the Hierarchy included the development of living quarters to house working girls under morally favorable conditions, and the extension of facilities to help widows with children by the distribution of sewing and other light work which can be done in the home.

A National Catholic Charities Convention is to be held in the near future to coordinate and expand the work of several hundred Catholic social welfare groups scattered throughout the country. The Bishops and mission superiors also discussed the establishment of a Women's Auxiliary to the hundreds of St. Vincent de Paul units now operating in Japan. (Tokyo 10/4—CIP.)

Holy Year Amnesty

A CONFERENCE of Italian prison chaplains recently held at Turin urged that a general amnesty be granted to prisoners who are serving sentences for crimes committed during the war.

"The war caused incalculable damage on both the moral and the spiritual plane," the chaplains declared in a resolution adopted unanimously. "The Holy Year, therefore, ought to be a year of mercy and pardon, under the sign of social peace and spiritual rebirth. By a general amnesty, it will be possible to bring families together again."

It is pointed out here that, according to a recent report from Brazil, certain classes of prisoners in that country will benefit from an amnesty in the Holy Year granted by President Eurico Gasper Dutra. (Rome 10/8—CIP.)

Books

Stafford Cripps: Master Statesman. Eric Estorick. John Day. $5.00.

IN THE course of his political career, Stafford Cripps has been called everything from a dangerous revolutionary to a disrupter of the Labor Party to, more recently, a heartless addict of socialist-induced austerity. American journalist Eric Estorick calls him "Master Statesman," and assembles a convincing array of facts to prove it. But Mr. Estorick succumbs to the occupational disease of biographers and insists that his subject has always taken the wisest course. For all his unusual intellectual ability and tireless industry, Sir Stafford has not staked out a valid claim to omniscience.

It is clear that down to the infamous day of Munich and even beyond, he vastly underrated the menace of Nazi Germany. Like many of his contemporaries of all political hues, he considered it merely a reactionary regime designed to bolster capitalism, and ignored its core of continuous destruction and violence. Therefore, in that turbulent period of Saturday crises, he vigorously concentrated on bringing about the defeat of "the workers' class enemy," the Conservative Government; he believed that if war should come, a socialist government alone could prosecute it without imperialistic intent and in the interests of the people. In his unremittant opposition to every Conservative policy, he found himself in the anomalous position of detesting Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, but opposing the imposition of sanctions against Italy because the Government favored them.

He feared, certainly with considerable cause, that the Conservatives were more eager to destroy the Soviet Union than to halt German aggression. In 1939, on the basis of the British government's past hostility and present vacillations, he fully justified the Russians' recourse to the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany. When as am-

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bassador to the Soviet Union, he surmised in January of 1941 that the Russians might be attempting to drive Japan into war with America, his comment was, "That is sound policy for the Russians to protect themselves in the East!"

But today in his position as one of the Big Three in the Labor Government, the responsibilities of power and the new international alignment have altered his theories both of class war and of unswerving loyalty to the USSR. He has become the director of a controlled economy, partly state-owned and partly private-owned, and is seeking to rehabilitate that most serious of war casualties, the British balance of trade, in the interests of the entire nation rather than—if Mr. Churchill will forgive the paraphrase—presiding over the dissolution of the capitalist system. As a spokesman of the western world, he is an acknowledged leader in the struggle to strengthen the West against the inroads of communism.

But the man who experienced such far-reaching changes of attitude, and whose actions make today's headlines and tomorrow's textbooks, remains a shadowy figure in these pages. Despite broad references to his "Christian idealism" and his acceptance of "the public service tradition of the enlightened upper middle class," the motivations behind his decisions are never adequately explored. The treatment has the superficial characteristics of an informed newspaper dispatch. Nor do the extensive excerpts from his letters and diaries which Mr. Estorick relies on—and which add at least eighty pages to the book—project his personality. The author speaks of his human warmth and even boisterous humor, but Stafford Cripps emerges, like the book, very sincere but rather dull.

CAROL H. WEISS.

The Young McDermott. Edward McSorley. Harper. $3.00.

NO MATTER how one feels about the Irish one must admit that they offer wonderful models for dramatic creations. Their high-pitched wailings and jubilations, their postures and colorful speech, their aptitude for defiant stands on the Deity (for and against), their laziness and crafty industry, all their blustering oppositions make them fine protagonists in projects of crisis and struggle.

In this book Mr. McSorley has used his knowledge of peculiar Irish-American qualities as a background for the story of Willie McDermott. The Irish family tendencies—the rows, the spontaneous union in gaiety, the loyalty in the face of outside criticism, the gossip, the opportunistic interpretations of religious responsibilities, the undisguised curiosity—these are the graver impressions of this story. They outweigh the tale of the young McDermott who left school after the death of his grandfather (the greatest man in the family and Willie's chief protector) to work on the local newspaper, realized some recognition for good work, quit rather than deny a principle, and who, after some confused penetrations into the world of evil in Rhode Island, New Jersey and Germany, returned home to seek the love of the woman he had loved in secret for a long time and to start a new life of independence and meaning.

The history of Willie McDermott, itself, is not especially effective because Willie is not well-formed. He suffers from the author's need to describe the whole complicated Irish-American picture. No one really takes shape in this book except, perhaps, a minor character, Uncle Mick, an example of that member of almost every Irish family who is a little bit wilder than the rest. This fellow loved a tattooed lady, and when he prods his sister-in-law with a walking stick in an effort to get food while another woman lies in a coffin he recalls the facility with which the Irish cause scandal in view of the newly dead.

There is also a conspicuous lack of unity in this book. An unsatisfactory minor story of a New England gangster group, several disproportionately long monologues by lesser characters, some unrelated episodes leave large gaps in the main plan. Once again a journalistic bent toward action and the unusual scene leads to the inclusion of non-essential material. Sections which might have had validity and power as independent sketches or short stories are weakened by their irrelevance.

But there are some good things in this book, some near Joycean moments. A letter written by a Jesuit indicates the remoteness from reality, the addiction to crippled platitudes and unlikely examples ("There is a story told . . .") which is a trait of many clerics; some of the dialogue about the Rebellion is reminiscent of the strolling conversations of Stephan Daedalus and Cranly; the curious inability of the young Irish to escape the family tether, even when they realize the constriction which it can impose on their own development or inclinations, is properly depicted.

The most obvious defect of this novel is the result of poor selectivity. In addition the characters are not made to come alive. Nevertheless, an understanding of a group temperament can be felt from the total picture. Happily, the Irish of this book are not the pasty, toora-loora paddies of recent movie and radio productions. The Irish are not without unholy qualities. And McSorley being an Irishman, knows it, and tells.

GEORGE MILES.

Conservatism Revisited. Peter Viereck. Scribners. $2.50.

MR. PETER VIERECK, in a most nourishing three-chapters, shows us Western Union in the light of the Concert of Europe. His three-fold purpose is instructional; perhaps almost didactic and doctrinal. His *Conservatism Revisited* first re-states the conservative principles; these he then illustrates by some history lessons from "Professor Metternich," one of the greatest conservatives of all time; and, finally, Dr. Viereck shows how we, quagmired though we are by Rousseau's cruel kindness, and though we live in a country and a century whose moral standards have rusted in the damp mist of meliorist intentions, may yet cultivate anew reticence, reverence, and, above all, reason.

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As the chief architect of the Concert of Europe, and of the peace that it provided for Europe during more or less all of ninety-nine years, Metternich has been vilified and lampooned by every liberal born alive and venerated by almost every conservative. Dr. Viereck, whose own *eidos* for Europe is profoundly and movingly expressed in his poem, "Kilroy was here," has put a blowtorch to the accumulations that have accreted to Metternich's reputation and has shown how this watershed figure alone held back the horrid flood of nationalism. When Metternich went down, the fourteenth of July was re-enacted all over Europe and the hiatus of hope was over. Thereafter, 1914, Nazism, and contemporary communism were "in the bag," latent and inevitable. Nothing could stop them. But, as Metternich observed, "in a hundred years the historian will understand me better."

The hundred years were up last year and Dr. Viereck is one historian who is understanding better. The evil Metternich did, Dr. Viereck points out in his foreword, has been gleefully pointed out, *ad nauseam*. The good has been largely buried—at least for English and American readers, in Hapsburg archives, only recently made public, in thousand-page, untranslated German biographies, and in Metternich's own memoirs. Now we have a brief breathing space won by us when we defeated Nazism, and for Dr. Viereck only one thing stands between the human race and annihilation: that aristocratic individualism which neither Nazi nor Communist torture could, nor can, break, which is the end-product of archetypal verities and virtues, and is pure spirit, the prerogative of no nation, nor race, nor class.

Dr. Viereck insists that "the core and fire-center of conservatism . . . is a humanist reverence for the dignity of the individual soul"—a perception that this "aristocratic individualism" exists, latent, even when not patent, in everyone. Dr. Viereck carefully distinguishes between the conservative who conserves discriminately, and the reactionary who does so indiscriminately, and also between "English" or western conservatism, on the one hand, and the reactionary misuse of conservatism in Eastern Europe and often in Central Europe. Yet he also points out that the worst reactionary excesses after the return of the Bourbons were not in Russia or in Germany, or in France, but in England at, and after, Peterloo.

★

IF DR. VIERECK'S definitions are accepted, then everything in his three chapters follows logically; if his premise is granted that it is conservatism alone which can successfully arrogate a claim to reverence the individual soul, then it is impossible to deny his argument or his conclusions. But the "classless diffusion of the aristocratic heritage" which impressed Metternich so greatly as an aspect of England, is surely part of the *whole* European tradition, standing foursquare on its Judeao-Greco-Roman-Christian base. It is this, surely, which makes us aware that it is wrong to lynch a guilty man, even if 99% of the population wish it, and which teaches us that "there are things a man must not do to save a nation," as John O'Leary put it to Yeats, or that patriotism, like conservatism is not enough—"I must have no hate in my heart," as Edith Cavell said. And that foursquare, humanist, cosmopolitan distillation of Europe cannot be the prerogative of conservatives only, however inclusively the term is used, but rather acts through all evolved human beings, whether liberals, such as John Stuart Mill or Heine, or conservatives, such as Metternich and Disraeli. The true function of democracy, as Dr. Viereck so rightly says, is to make all citizens aristocrats, not to lop the tallest heads to fit the forests of mediocrity.

The vision of a cosmopolitan Europe united in peace, which was Metternich's, and that of one world free from fear, which was Roosevelt's, have one thing in common: that their greatest foe is nationalism. Dr. Viereck makes a distinction, as does Pope Pius XII, between the people and the masses, and his anger is great at the "morally illiterate culture of unhappy and untragic pleasure-seekers" who have failed to "root their masses in the universals of civilization," and who are simply "Neanderthalers with a high I.Q., giggling apes playing at snowball fights with atom-bombs."

His use of quotation is effective; he cites Burckhardt (in 1818) with his premonition that the military state will become one single vast factory, and Europe over-run by the "terrible simplicators". "People no longer believe in principles but will probably periodically believe in saviors. Long, voluntary subjection under individual Fuehrers is in prospect." And Goethe, fearing that a romantic revival of the Siegfried legends might lead to an anti-civilized glorification. And Heine, who, faced with the nationalism of Kleist, Stein, Fichte and Jahn, utters the most terrible warning of all: "Should the subduing talisman, the Cross, break, then will come roaring forth the wild madness of the old champions, the insane Berserker rage. . . . Thor, leaping to life with his giant hammer, will crush the Gothic cathedrals."

★

AS THE contrast between Metternich and Stein symbolized Germany's choice between Austria and Prussia, so the rising nationalism of the Germans threatened the Concert of Europe in 1830, as it later threatened the League of Nations in 1930. Jahn's gymnastic institutions, Kleist's vigorous anti-semitism, the military suppression of Czech Liberals (June, 1848), Jordan's speeches on the Germanizing of other races by the German Volk in 1849, the unification of Germany "by blood if necessary;" against these, Metternich pitched his long struggle, detesting the "atavistic attacks of soil attachment," and proclaiming that "Europe has come to be my native country." This "conservative socialist," as Metternich described himself to Guizot, whose key word was "law," has much to teach us without over-simplification of ethics; we to whom "un-American" means generally more than un-Christian, and to whom the stigma of being a second-class citizen is more than the slur of amorality or sin. "We are the last agonizants of the Metter-

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nichian tragedy," writes Dr. Viereck, and adds that we have let the "white and red Jacobins"—Nazis and Communists—invade our citadels and have admitted some of their attitudes and ways of thinking into our very souls.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Portable Chaucer. Selected and translated by Theodore Morrison. Viking. $2.00.

THIS book has a number of very real merits but also an enormous defect. One merit is that the selections made could not be much improved on, except by the substitution of the exquisite ballade, "Hyd, Absolom, thy gilte tresses clere," from "The Legend of Good Women" for one or two of the minor pieces included. Another merit is the admirable introduction by this former student of the course on Chaucer at Harvard conducted jointly by the late George Lyman Kitteridge and F. N. Robinson. Mr. Morrison draws freely upon their edition of Chaucer and he dedicates his book to them. In this introduction he is especially good when dealing with Chaucer's religious beliefs and his alleged obscenity, which he correctly describes as being rather vulgarity, though vulgarity in its best sense of enjoyment of the whole of life. He also, when commenting upon the modernizers of Chaucer, gives what amounts to a condemnation of himself. For though he avoids the differing faults of Pope and Dryden and Wordsworth, he falls into a new fault, of which he seems to be aware, that of using slang. About all this he is modest, and claims no more than that "the world has changed and I have simply done the best I can" and again, "I well know that my resources have not been equal to the task." Even so, I wonder whether it was really necessary, even for the sake of rhyme, to use expressions like "bop" and "spank" and "caught off base."

The fact is that nobody has ever been equal to the task of translating Chaucer, or ever will be. This book may be useful as a kind of crib for lazy students in college, but any translation spoils Chaucer, and no translation is really necessary, for anybody can read Chaucer who will do so with his ear. Chesterton complained about a previous translator who rendered the famous lines

What is this world? What asken men to have?
Now with his love, now in the colde grave,
Alone withouten any company,

as

What is this world? What asketh man to have?
Now with his love, now cold within his grave,
Alone, alone, with none for company,

saying: "if there be any human being who cannot read the line, 'Alone withouten any company', who does not know at once that 'withouten' means 'without', I should imagine he must be a very rare and isolated sort of reader; withouten any company and certainly withouten any common sense." Mr. Morrison's rendering is even worse:

What is this world? And what would a man have?
Now with his love, and now in his cold grave,
Alone, without a soul for company.

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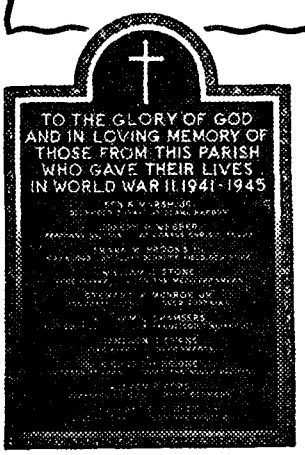

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One cannot but shudder at such foolish desecration.

Admittedly there are much more difficult passages, but it would have been better to have left Chaucer in his original text, in which alone his charm and brilliance and pungency can be found. Mr. Morrison turns the rime royal of "Troilus and Criseyde", that wonderful novel, into blank verse, something not used in English until the sixteenth century. He flatters himself that, by doing so, he has been able to shorten the poem by one half, and he does have a good introductory note on the poem. But here he has not done nearly as well as George Philip Krapp, whose "translation" was sumptuously published in 1932 with wood engravings by Eric Gill; for Krapp at least retained rime royal.

In spite of this, Krapp failed upon the whole, and Theodore Morrison must be said to have failed—in "Troilus and Criseyde" to the point of outrage. The task is of course an impossible one, but also one that is needless, at least in our time, when modern Chaucerian studies should have served to make Chaucer far more intelligible than is often the case with Shakespeare. The worst feature of these so-called translations is that they obscure Chaucer, in the sense of hiding him from view. The only people who can read them without loss are those familiar with Chaucer's own text—and they are likely to suffer a loss of temper. While commending Mr. Morrison for what deserves to be commended, I must, in the main, deplore the production of this work.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

The Hours and the Ages. Edward Nichols. Sloane. $3.50.

HOLDING that history was biography, Emerson declared that the hours of man's life were shaped by the ages, and the ages in turn shaped by these hours. Edward Nichols has used this concept in a book which seeks to bring alive for the general reader certain important elements in the American past. Since he believes that "history is people" and that facts and social theories are lifeless without them, Mr. Nichols has written brief biographical interpretations of a handful of eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans whose lives both mirrored their times and helped to shape the development of American society in its Northern and Southern forms. He has been remarkably successful in depicting personalities vividly, but the basic historical processes are more frequently than not veiled in an irritatingly pretentious fog of neo-Transcendental theorizing.

His "sequence of Americans" is a colorful crew. They include Betsey Pinckney, who began managing Carolina plantations at sixteen; Dr. Charles Chauncey, who fought George Whitefield's revivalism but himself paved the way for the breakup of New England Calvinism; Sam Adams and Thomas Hutchinson, who exemplified the popular and aristocratic traditions in New England political life; Jefferson and Jackson, spokesmen of the old and new South; Thomas Hart Benton, prophet of the new West; Margaret Fuller, focal center of the Transcendentalists; John and Jessie Fremont, the agents

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of Benton's imperialist dreams; Horace Greeley and the Blairs, who founded the Republican Party. Mr. Nichols has done full justice to their colorful personalities and to their colorful backgrounds. But he has catered too much to the contemporary concern with personality to do equal justice to the facts and social theories with which he is essentially concerned. For all the Transcendental theorizing and gropings for a philosophy of history, the treatment is superficial and sometimes reminiscent of Hollywood's excursions into history. Mr. Nichols has a noteworthy talent for characterization and for popularization, however, which may inspire a wider interest in history of a less hectic sort.

MASON WADE.

A Sand County Almanac. Aldo Leopold. Illustrated by Charles W. Schwartz. Oxford University Press. $3.50.

ALDO LEOPOLD signed and dated the foreword of this book only a little more than a month before his death last year. We may count ourselves lucky to have this final testament of a man who was not only an expert in forestry, ecology and game management, but an exceptionally sensitive and subtle appreciator and communicator of earth-values.

His "almanac" is a gathering of sketches, magazine reprints, notebook jottings: a miscellany of Leopold's observations and meditations as he roamed the outdoors of his beloved Wisconsin or took an occasional trip "outside," to Manitoba, Arizona, Mexico. The prose is at once delicate and strong (being matched in these qualities by Charles Schwartz's excellent drawings); and it abounds in terse epigrammatic observations. "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." "Recreation is not the outdoors, but our reaction to it." "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, but He is no longer the only one to do so. When some remote ancestor of ours invented the shovel, he became a giver: he could plant a tree. And when the axe was invented, he became a taker: he could chop it down. Whoever owns land has thus assumed, whether he knows it or not, the divine functions of creating and destroying. . . ."

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EDWARD SKILLIN, Jr.
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of October, 1949.
JOHN McDERMOTT
(My commission expires March 30, 1951.)

serve God and help the world. Their temperaments are five, and their conceptions of how ultimately to fulfil their common desire are also five. A seminary can compass diversity among its students in any amount, but since its purpose is single, so the educating of the students must be single-minded. There is one regimen of studies, one spiritual discipline, as there is one God to serve. Submission, complete and unreserved, to the seminary ideal and discipline is the great hard fact confronting the five young hopefuls of this novel.

The virtues and weaknesses of their characters clash with one another and with the seminary's gloved fist. One by one, four of the five drop out. Their flaws went too deep to be removed as cleanly as the seminary required; they could not or would not obliterate emotional ties with the world, or they were unable to discern the real mercy underlying the seeming mercilessness of priestly training. The fifth young man chose and was chosen, but only after he had teetered on the brink, wavering between the lure of human love and the service of God.

T. O'CONOR SLOANE, III.

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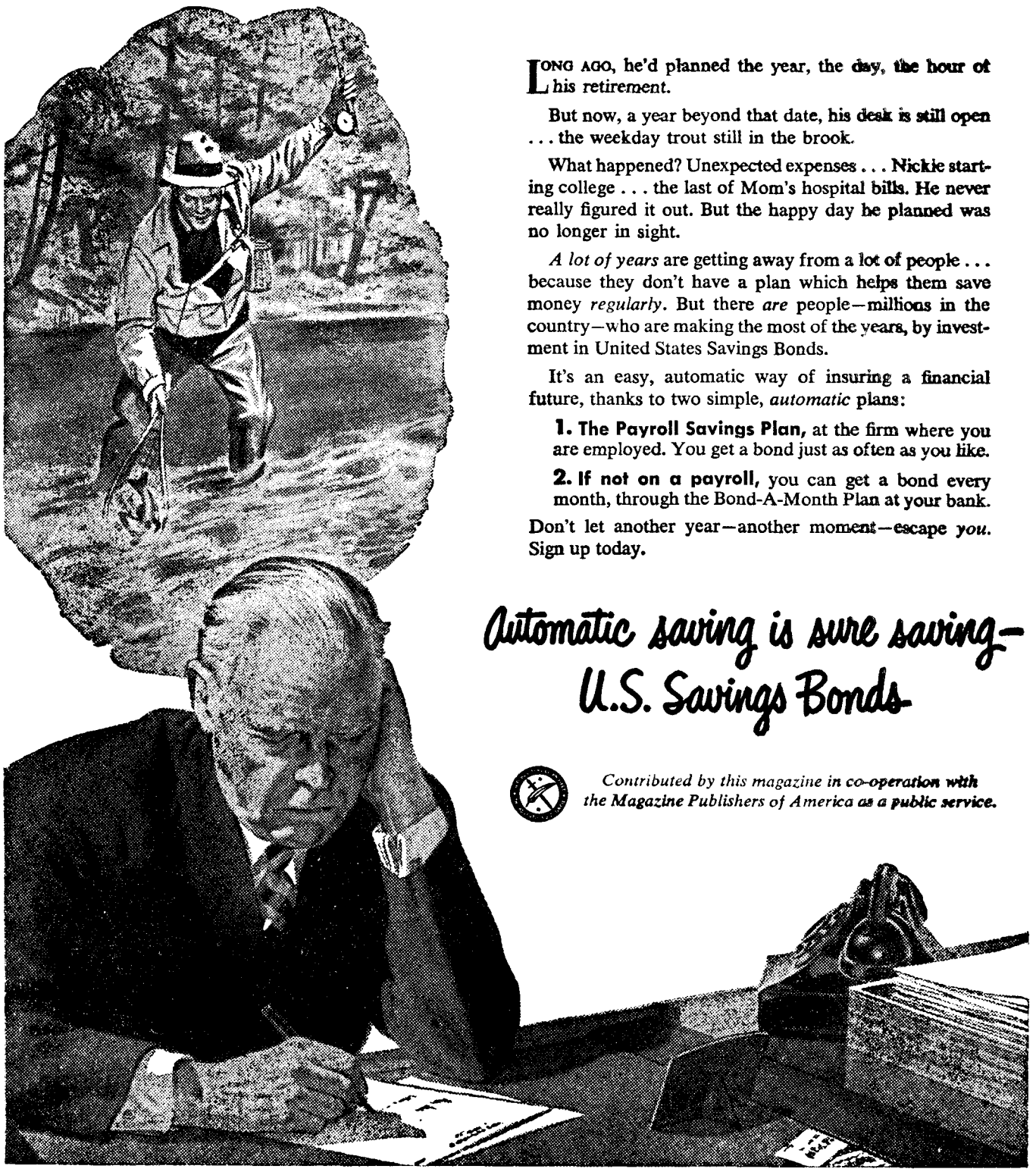

LONG AGO, he'd planned the year, the day, the hour of his retirement.

But now, a year beyond that date, his desk is still open . . . the weekday trout still in the brook.

What happened? Unexpected expenses . . . Nickie starting college . . . the last of Mom's hospital bills. He never really figured it out. But the happy day he planned was no longer in sight.

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